



Human factory-farming in 20th century Britain

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Human factory-farming in 20th century Britain

CHARLOTTE FRANKLIN

BROILER BABIES ARE THE MANY ILLEGITIMATE CHILDREN bred for consumption by adoption. In a Home for the Unmarried Mother, the parent of the prospective baby is given ideal medical care and attention, every opportunity for rest and relaxation. Physically the hygienic surroundings and well balanced diet could be the envy of other mothers expecting their babies in the free range conditions of the ordinary working home. The free range mother can have the hazards of an evening at a cinema or pub, or even more dangerous activities like a late night out unsupervised. The broiler mother is carefully guarded against unsuitable influences.

There is a disadvantage for this lucky broiler parent living in the clean warm surroundings with meals and TV. None of the joy, the fulfilment of nine months pregnancy, the labour of birth, awaits her.

Fascinated and delighted we watch a cat with her new born kitten. The orangutan mother playing with her baby in a confined cage in the London Zoo was an unforgettably moving sight. Lord Snowdon's beautiful first pictures of Princess Margaret with little Viscount Linley confirmed this strange phenomenon of natural pride, joy and protectiveness, even though that baby, high in the social scale, had nannies as well as a mother to care for it.

No such idyllic picture can be taken of a human broiler mother. She must not allow herself to be carried away by her real feelings. She knows the disapproval of the world at large, the stigma for her, and most particularly for her baby. It is better not to be selfish and love the child. Best be realistic. Offer it for adoption as quickly as possible. Experts in placement will help. Everyone will tell you, the mother is entirely free to make her own choice about adoption. Professor Joad used to say—it all depends what you mean by choice.

The broiler mother has performed her physical function of producing a child. She is not needed to feed the baby as other female mammals or humans in less advanced communities. Maybe she still shares some of these primitive instincts of motherhood. The sooner she hides and suppresses them, returns to society with a cheerful face

CHARLOTTE FRANKLIN, who contributed to ANARCHY 43 on "Parents and Teachers" has worked in a Hostel for Unmarried Mothers and has visited several others. She is married herself, and has four boys.

and no baby, the better for her. Maybe in twenty years time a psychologist will try to cope with her experiences. That is a long way off. Let's follow the broiler child, its destiny now in the hands of professionals.

The child is treated as if it were an applicant to a marriage broker for a partner. In a marriage both parties are usually represented. In this case of adoption the matchmaking is very one sided, with no knowledge of the child's character or desires. At a guess its instinct might be for the real mother. Much research goes on in child psychology. All the case histories, records, experiments, leave us as ignorant as any primitive tribe—if not more so. Psychologists have at any rate made one great discovery. It is preferable for a child to be brought up in a home with a father figure and a mother figure rather than in an institution. This is one of the reasons for the spread of the practice of adoption. Perhaps when enough little chimpanzees have been made utterly miserable, deprived even of mother figures, and reared by electric stimuli alone, some great scientist will come up with the strange notion that one real mother may be worth two figures!

Be that as it may be. Adoptions were pioneered and even today are largely performed by societies of varying religious denominations. Trained social workers will have carefully vetted the long queue of prospective adopters. These worthy people may really believe, after the rigorous interrogations, that they have a specially suitable home for a deprived child. Yet ultimately the only test is money, money, money. This is highly practical. A spinster, a couple with a divorce background, a woman who has committed adultery herself, all these are able to adopt a child—if they have an outwardly respectable home.

It is rather puzzling that the religious societies should have such arrogant confidence in undoing God's choice of parent. These societies arose in the days of orphans and abandoned infants. Instead of going out of business when the supply of orphans and needy infants in England dried up, new needy children were found—the illegitimate. The minor problem of the real live mother, as well as the child, has had to be arranged by special birth certificates and signatures and considerable deliberate secrecy. The mother ought never to have existed. She does not fit into the scheme at all. It is heretical, anarchistic and all things bad to suggest that the scheme may be more wrong than the mother.

The broiler baby is passed through the hands of a guardian *ad litem*—with the help of moral welfare workers, child care officers, probation officers and the help of a Court of Law, to the new home, selected according to religion, social milieu, colour of eyes and other pseudo-scientific principles. Success of this transplantation of the young life is so taken for granted, that the case is considered closed. The social biologists with the impressive titles heave a sigh of satisfaction. One problem has been solved.

Biologically deceptive adoption of this kind has only been legally possible since 1927 and it has increased in recent years, according to the statistics. This is understandably a tender, secret subject, for we

are dealing with human beings, not plants or animals, where impartial follow-up work would be done.

Just a little evidence is emerging, that broiler babies in later life are not so contented with the choice that was made on their behalf. A society called Adoptees Anonymous has been formed. A documentary TV programme showed viewers some of the haunting worry, concerning his true ancestry, felt by a grown up adoptee. No news might be good news. Whether we worry about the psychology of the broiler baby in ideal physical circumstances may depend on our philosophy. Is each baby an entirely new being or only a link in a chain of life?

The common assumption is that we humans are responsible for our own deeds. No one need become an unmarried mum if she conforms to the moral precepts of our society. This is a one sided unrealistic assumption. Children are told it takes two to make a quarrel. It takes two to make a baby, female certainly, but also male. All people in their hearts know that.

Our whole culture is geared to the male in this. In Victorian times we had two classes of women:

1. *wives* to bear children and make a home,
2. *others* to provide sexual satisfaction. Dickens and Tolstoy describe this situation with some pang of conscience about the tragedies that result.

Thanks to medical advances in methods of birth control, lascivious freedom is equal now for women. But parenthood—Oh no!

Only men may freely and irresponsibly beget. They may be rich or poor, clever or stupid, kind or cruel. With a little bit of luck they can sail successfully through life regardless of illegitimate offspring and sometimes even of legitimate. We accept this situation, possibly sadly but honestly. We do not face with sympathy the woman's half, the corollary—which would be that—women really want, even need, care of their infants.

The woman is the only parent of whom we can be sure. This was recognised by the Roman principle "*Pater semper incertus*". By our Common Law the de facto mother is subordinate to the de jure father. All our economic set-up helps the male, for he is supposed to be the chief breadwinner for the family. For a long time now fathers have not fulfilled these expectations adequately. Emlyn Williams in *George*, D. H. Lawrence in *Sons and Lovers* describe the bitter struggle of working-class women to obtain a fair share of the husband's earnings, for themselves and the children; the heartbreak of watching so much of that money go in drink. These hard-labouring men have our sympathy for needing a little cheer from the bottle. Virginia Woolf in *Three Guineas* describes similar situations higher up the social scale.

This muddled thinking of the importance of the fathers in family life causes us a lot of trouble.

Social workers shake their heads sadly at the phenomenon of fatherless families who need help. Psychologists warn us that far more women than men will end as mental patients. Religious leaders deplore the rise in illegitimacy. Sociologists blame alienated society.

These are not matters for experts. We are all involved. Maternal instinct must again be recognised and not exploited. King Solomon long ago judged simply between the contesting mothers and his wisdom has been acknowledged, even if not acted on, ever since. This instinct of motherhood is fundamental and we cannot eradicate it by mere will power. Lady Macbeth tried hard enough!

*"Come you spirits that tend on mortal thoughts
Unsex me here.*

*.....
Stop up the access and passage of remorse."*

Her sleep-walking remorse may be thought far-fetched for our broiler mothers, but a true story follows.

A year ago in an Unmarried Mothers Hostel a woman was struggling to make up her own mind about her baby—to offer it for adoption or to keep it. Her own father was resolute in refusing her back home. She took weeks over this decision, becoming quite pale and ill, in great contrast with her flourishing healthy pregnancy. At last she decided for adoption. I said to the experienced and most sympathetic Matron with some relief—"I am glad she has come to a decision. In the course of time she can now get over it." Matron replied: "She will never get over it. Some never do."

Here is the crux. The unmarried mother is a mother first and foremost. The unmarried state may loom large, but must not deceive us into a false classification—like putting a whale among the fish.

We have this problem, a very difficult one, of understanding the term *mother* in the scientific age. Safe bottle feeding has been a most revolutionary baby rearing aid. There are innumerable others, like the pram. Twelve years ago a Korean refugee girl helping in my house was shocked, quite horrified, that we could leave our baby in the pram, all by himself, even without crying. In Korea she told me, a small baby always has human contact, is never left to lie alone. The spotless English nanny wheeling the sparkling polished pram with the dolled up baby through the park is our magazine image of a lucky baby. Perhaps the African mother carrying her baby on her back has more to teach us. We neglect the earliest mutual contact between mother and child. Then we go to the other extreme. Dr. Simon Yudkin in his pamphlet on the *Health and Welfare of the Immigrant Child* is concerned by our Western exclusive mother-child tie for as much as five years. He points out that this has not been true for the rest of human history and that it is not healthy in our culture.

For historical, economic, social and other reasons, the plight of our unmarried mothers can be heartbreaking. We must not allow the growing pseudo science and secret art masquerading by the socially acceptable term "adoption" to degrade our women into broiler breeders. The sad childless woman must find another solution to her lack. Once a woman has become a mother there is no longer any choice in the matter. The situation must be faced with honesty and the true problems solved, not artificial creations of new ones.

The rigid child

PENELOPE LEACH

ALMOST EVERYBODY is a parent, and absolutely everybody has been a child, so we all think that we know something about child-rearing. In point of fact, we know scientifically extremely little. One thing that we do not know is what the effects of *specific* methods of child-rearing are in terms of what happens to people later. Therefore the advice that we give to parents tends either to be very general, or a matter of fashion. There have been fantastic swings even over the last 50 years in what we tell parents they should do, and we still tend to imply to parents that if they do certain things they will achieve a given effect. We simply do not know whether this is true or not; nor do we know what kind of effect we would really like to achieve.

I have been studying intellectual, social, and emotional rigidity in children who have had a certain kind of upbringing which I will call authoritarian upbringing. I am interested both in rigidity and in authoritarianism but the main reason for choosing these topics was that this is one area in which the cause-and-effect relationship between rearing and later results can be studied.

The Nature of Rigidity

Rigidity is really a pathological form of a normal human mechanism. All human beings select and filter the stimuli that they take from the outside world. We have to do this; otherwise we could not function at all. If you walked into a room and you actually perceived everything about that room, you would be so busy perceiving it that you would have no time to function as a human being. But there is a particular pathological kind of selection and filtering which is what we call rigidity. The "rigid" individual goes through life using only a minute part of his environment, refusing to accept, to see, to hear, to recognize many of the things which go on around him. What makes this pathological is that, rather than being something which the individual does in the interests of efficiency, this is something that he does in the interests of defending himself against stimuli which he finds alarming, upsetting, frightening in some way. Most rigid individuals

PENELOPE LEACH is Junior Research Fellow in the Department of Psychology at the London School of Economics.

do not know that they are rigid: you cannot know that you are ignoring something if you do not see it.

Psychologists have studied various aspects of rigidity. Some of them have said that rigidity does not exist as an entity; others have implied that it does. So what I did was to use, and in some cases to devise, testing situations for assessing this kind of reaction in emotional situations, in social situations, in problem solving, and so forth. One of the tests involved presenting eleven-year-old children with a large number of everyday objects—things like matchboxes, tins of soup, or balls of knitting wool. The children were asked to sort these out to make groups in any way that seemed to them logical. Most children started by sorting these objects according to their function: they would put toys together, eating utensils together, and so on. When they had done this I would say "Right, that's fine—that's a perfectly good way of classifying them. Now think of another way". The point was that these objects could also be sorted by such things as colour, material, other abstract classifications; but only by cutting across the sorting by function. The non-rigid children tended to have no difficulty with this at all. They would at once put the red objects together, and so on. The extremely rigid children not only could not do this, but in some instances could not even recognize it. I would put a red apple, a red ball of knitting wool, a red tin of soup together, and say "Do these go together in any way at all?" One child said: "No, they can't go together—I mean the knitting wool must go with mother's things. The apple is for eating".

Moral Judgments

Another test concerned the making of moral judgments. Here I used a series of rules which I established from pilot work were general in the lives of these children. One, for instance, was the rule that you must not talk to strangers in the street, which is almost universal among London primary-school children. I presented cartoon pictures to the children which showed a child of roughly the same age-group breaking this rule for a reason which any parent in the sample would have ratified. This particular picture was of an old lady who had fallen down in the street and dropped her shopping all over the pavement, and a child stopping and saying "Can I help you pick them up? Are you all right?"—a piece of behaviour to which any mother would have said "yes that's right, that's nice considerate behaviour". Rigid children would tend to say "Oh, she shouldn't have done that. You mustn't talk to strangers in the street! It's a rule!", where the non-rigid children would say "Ah, but this is different: this is a poor old lady who has fallen down. She's harmless".

As far as general life situations go, obviously rules for behaviour have a value, particularly with young children. But—this is a personal view—I do not think you can give children rules which will genuinely cover every behavioural situation. You may be able to give them rules for ways of thinking about things which will cover every situation.

But if you try to teach them a rule for everything, the system is going to break down. They must generalize.

The Origins of Rigidity

The origins of this kind of rigid behaviour seem to lie in early upbringing. In the normal process, by which a child turns from a purely egocentric being into a socialized person, the system seems to work something like this: gradually in the first few months of life, he begins to realize that some of his gratification, which is the only thing he is concerned with, is dependent not only on his mother but, through his mother, on his own behaviour. In other words, there are some kinds of behaviour in him which lead her to behave in a way that he likes. This is, if you like, the beginning of differentiation of himself from his mother. In a normal situation, where the relationship between the two of them is close and affectionate, he will gradually maximize those behaviours which have this effect, and gradually minimize those that work the other way. Extremely rigid children seem to experience something slightly different. Mothers of rigid children tend to set for the child expectations of behaviour which are much too high for his own developmental level. They tend to present the child with concepts which he is not sufficiently mature to understand at all. For example, a mother who tries to teach a two-year-old to be "clean" is presenting him with something impossibly difficult to understand. She is really saying: "I would like you to use your pot, rather than your pants. I would like you to try to keep your clothes clean, which means something about play. I wish you would not throw sand all over the kitchen floor, but"—for some extraordinarily incomprehensible reason—"I mind much more when I've swept it, than I do when I haven't". She is linking all these into an amorphous concept, which is cleanliness.

For a child, whose greatest anxiety—and this is important to remember—is to please, this means that he has to strive to come up to this kind of requirement from his mother. If he cannot meet what she wants because he does not understand it, then her love, which comes through pleasing her, begins to seem unattainable for the child, which increases the anxiety level. Probably the only way that he can cope with this situation is to learn to dichotomize each individual thing that he does into what she likes and what she does not like, and this becomes what is right and what is wrong, what is black and what is white. He loses the ability to generalize, to understand a concept rather than a specific action.

The Upbringing of Rigid Children

This kind of upbringing goes with a syndrome which we call authoritarianism. Authoritarian parents are not unloving, rejecting, or cruel. Like the vast majority of parents, they do what they consider to be the best for their children. But the authoritarian adult is the kind of person whose view of the social world is extremely highly structured,

and the structure is very much based on considerations of power, of strength, of in-groups and out-groups. It is a very black-and-white picture of the social world, so that there tends to be a complete acceptance of the mores of his own group, and, with that, a complete rejection of those of other groups. One of the manifestations of this is prejudice: colour-prejudice, anti-semitic prejudice—all these things tend to go with authoritarianism.

Such a personality, which rejects what is different—what does not have its own values—brings its attitudes to child-rearing, as well as to everything else. If you have this preoccupation with power, and with what is socially right and wrong, this extreme conventionality, you tend to see your children as something very different from yourself in the first place, and as something which must be moulded in a deliberate way, to be as like you as possible as quickly as possible. You are teaching them how to behave, rather than teaching them how to make their own little space without impinging on the space of other people.

One mother, for instance, said to me, quite kindly: "In bringing up children obedience is the first essential. I'm older than the children. They must learn to respect what I say. They must learn to do what I say. This is the only way I can save them from the world". If you think about this, it is like somebody leading a pet dog through a dangerous jungle; it is not like one human being talking about another human being. Whereas another mother from a non-authoritarian group said: "It's very difficult to say what you should do with children, because really anything you can find that makes things easier and pleasanter for you will be good for them. I just take it easy with my children, and it works".

I have tested a great many children for rigidity, and it was the rigid children who tended to have highly authoritarian mothers; and vice versa. It therefore seems as if the kind of upbringing typical of authoritarian parents tends to produce children who use these rigid defence mechanisms. While we are not sure what results we are trying to achieve in child-rearing and are therefore seldom in a position to tell parents exactly how to bring up their children, I think it is fair to assume that both authoritarianism and rigidity are undesirable. Rigidity is so restricting that the thing it mostly restricts is the individual's own potential — potential for use of the environment, potential for sparking off, potential for ideas, for creativity in fact. It is surely better that people should be psychologically able to use whatever gifts they may have than that, for emotional reasons, they should be using only a very small part of them.

Combating Rigidity

It is difficult to say what can be done about this. Authoritarian and rigid individuals are the very ones that you cannot reach by reason. I have seen a kindergarten teacher faced with a very rigid five-year-old, who has been taught to keep her clothes clean and cannot paint or play with clay, kindly reassuring her that "really, Janet, nobody will

be cross, if—" and so on; without realizing that by doing this she is simply putting herself further and further beyond the pale. The child knows that it is wrong to get dirty. It is saying to itself, "This is an adult. Why is she telling me to do wrong things?" A much more gradual process has got to take place. Some research going on at the moment seems to show that although the foundations of rigidity are in the early family, the school environment can have some effect on the extent of rigidity in the children. In other words, a very child-oriented, liberal school tends to produce fewer very rigid children than the more normal authoritarian kind of school. This makes a certain amount of sense in this way: authoritarian parents tend to set great store by school performance; rigid children are therefore encouraged to do well at school, to adopt the school, to accept it. Therefore, it may be that if they are being encouraged to accept a very liberal atmosphere, this will gradually have some effect in weakening the rigid boundaries of their thinking. And, of course, the fewer rigid children we have in our schools now, the fewer authoritarian parents we shall have producing rigid children in the next generation.

Another possible moment for attack on this, it seems to me, is in adolescence. In our culture this is notoriously a time for throwing over at least the outward signs of what you have been taught by your parents and your family. This being so, it seems a possible moment for stepping in. In fact, I have a wild theory that those adolescents who are most a-social, seeming completely rootless, may be the very ones who have thrown over their parental background, but, because it was a very rigid one, have had to throw away the entire thing; a very rigid structure is not something that you can throw away only a little bit of. The pity is that because such adolescents worry our society, they tend only to meet a reinstatement of the authoritarian structure they have tried to escape. In other words, what they bump up against is the police at Brighton, or the Borstal institution, or whatever it may be. This is only taking them back into what they were trying to get out of.

I think our greatest hope for the moment is a rather back-to-front one. If we think it important to lessen the production of rigid children, one of the ways that we can do it is by playing the game on authoritarian grounds. In other words, if we can reach a situation where the accepted middle-class values in child-rearing are those which do not produce rigidity, then we may be winning the battle. Authoritarian parents will accept the conventional middle-class role, almost whatever it is, and it may be that Dr. Spock, most of whose work is devoted towards helping parents to take it easy with their children, may end up by being used as a rule book. He would not welcome this, but in this particular situation I think it is better to have the right thing done for the wrong reason, than the wrong thing done.

Failure at School

PETER FORD

To a very great degree, school is a place where children learn to be stupid.

JOHN HOLT.

IN OFFICIAL EDUCATIONAL CONFERENCES, or even school staff-meetings, it often seems that the really important issues are just not discussed or are discussed in a way that obscures their real importance. Behind most of the talk there is an implied ideology which sees education in terms of an industry with a consequent compulsion to meet the needs of the market—in this case, the steady provision of individuals adequately fitted for their roles in the labour force and social hierarchy. How literally true this can be is illustrated in the words of a London teacher, offered by him as a justification for streaming: "Throughout industry it is necessary to grade products." (Quoted in *New Left Review* No. 29.) The comprehensive schools controversy is often argued, implicitly, in such terms. "Will the new educational provisions produce individuals as conveniently related to their future income groups as does the present tripartite system?" Although the idea of comprehensive schools would seem to relate to anarchist ideas, I suspect that in actuality, for most of those directly involved, it will mean little more than a change of labels, and for the staff-room pyramid-climbers, a struggle to preserve something comparable to their present positions after reorganisation. For a clear statement of the real issues—education seen in terms of individual and valuable persons—it would be hard to better John Holt's book. Perhaps just because his argument is directed at the foundations rather than the details of the system, the publication of *How Children Fail** two years ago seemed to arouse only small interest.

are drawn from his experiences in American primary schools. From his description an English "progressive" primary school would be comparable; a mildly permissive regime without obvious forms of

Mr. Holt is an American teacher and most of his practical examples

* *HOW CHILDREN FAIL* by John Holt (Pitman 25s.).

PETER FORD is a teacher and is interested in the formation of a Libertarian Teachers Association—for "practical co-operation, direct action, and the promotion of libertarian ideas on all aspects of education". He hopes that others interested will write to: Alec Taylor, Basement Flat 1A, 10 St. George's Terrace, London, N.W.1, or to Peter Ford, 102 Stotford Road, Arlesey, Bedfordshire.

reward and punishment. It is worth noting that this kind of school which, I suspect, is often regarded indulgently in libertarian circles, is not exempt from the attack. Mr. Holt's speciality is the teaching of mathematics and a proportion of the book is taken up with detailed accounts of his work with children using various pieces of mathematical apparatus, particularly Cuisenaire rods. In a review of the book in *Peace News* (July 30th, 1965) Mr. Michael Duane wrote: "Almost every educational dictum is gently but ruthlessly exposed for what it is—a formula devised to make mass-teaching more tolerable for harassed teachers—by his simply recounting exactly what happened between child and teacher in a variety of classroom situations." It is divided into four main sections: Strategy, Fear and Failure, Real Learning, and How Schools Fail. In his Foreword the author summarises them:

"Strategy deals with the ways in which children try to meet, or dodge, the demands that adults make on them in school. Fear and Failure deals with the interaction in children of fear and failure, and the effect of this on strategy and learning. Real Learning deals with the difference between what children appear to know or are expected to know, and what they really know. How Schools Fail analyzes the ways in which schools foster bad strategies, raise children's fears, produce learning which is usually fragmentary, distorted, and short lived, and generally fail to meet the real needs of children."

A basic contention of the author is that schools operate by the manipulation of fear. Fear is the actual motivator—and the institutional "cement"—even though this may be unacknowledged or actively denied by partisans of the system.

"We like children who are a little afraid of us, docile, deferential children, though not, of course, if they are so obviously afraid that they threaten our image of ourselves as kind, lovable people whom there is no reason to fear. We find ideal the kind of 'good' children who are just enough afraid of us to do everything we want, without making us feel that fear of us is what is making them do it."

Children adopt a variety of strategies as a result of their pervasive fear, and particularly as a response to what might be called "the tyranny of right answers":

"Practically everything we do in school tends to make children answer-directed. In the first place, right answers pay off. Schools are a kind of temple of worship for 'right answers', and the way to get ahead is to lay plenty of them on the altar."

The steady production of right answers tends to distract the teacher from any awareness that very often even his "best" pupils actually understand little or nothing of the subject-matter that is supposedly being taught. A feeling that this is perhaps overstating the case derives, I think, from a failure to realise the vast chasm between real understanding and "parrot-memory". We have become accustomed to accepting one for the other and, to some extent, within the present system a teacher's self-esteem depends on his doing so. Writing about Paul Goodman's book *Compulsory Miseducation* (*Peace News*, 2nd

April, 1965), John Holt noted how Goodman "makes the very important and rarely understood point that schools have become bad places even for those who do very well in them." Some of the reasons why this is so are made clear in the present book, particularly in the consideration of tests and exams which in a sense, are a corner-stone of school-strategy, offering a potential bonus to the teacher's self-image; tangible evidence that he is "getting results". Perhaps more than this, exams provide a very powerful means of control. After all, what is referred to as "work" in schools (and in society-at-large) is from some points of view the prime weapon of discipline.

In the section "Real Learning", John Holt sets out the conditions required for learning to take place.

"A child learns, at any moment, not by using the procedure that seems best to us, but the one that seems best to him; by fitting into his structure of ideas and relationships, his mental model of reality, not the piece we think comes next, but the one he thinks comes next." If he is afraid, subject in his activities to the influences of reward and punishment, approval-disapproval, this cannot happen. Real learning will not occur and what usually passes as such is, in William Godwin's phrase, no more than "a semblance and mockery of real activity".

Towards the end of the book John Holt writes:

"If you think it is your duty to make children do what you want, whether they will or not, then it follows inexorably that you must make them afraid of what will happen to them if they don't do what you want. You can do this in the old-fashioned way, openly and avowedly, with the threat of harsh words, infringement of liberty, or physical punishment. Or you can do it in the modern way, subtly, smoothly, quietly, by withholding the acceptance and approval which you and others have trained the children to depend on; or by making them feel that some retribution awaits them in the future, too vague to imagine but too implacable to escape. You can, as many skilled teachers do, learn to tap with a word, a gesture, a look, even a smile, the great reservoir of fear, shame, and guilt that today's children carry around inside them. Or you can simply let your own fears, about what will happen to you if the children don't do what you want, reach out and infect them."

The changes demanded if Holt's analysis is correct are revolutionary. I am sure he recognises this. The accepted order in schools—in fact the alleged "educational system"—directly obstructs the purpose and practice of real education. One alternative is "To have schools and classrooms in which each child can satisfy his curiosity, develop his abilities and talents, pursue his interests, and from the adults and older children around him to get a glimpse of the great variety and richness of life. In short, the school should be a great smorgasbord of intellectual, artistic, creative, and athletic activities, from which each child could take whatever he wanted, and as much as he wanted, or as little."

For this to happen, a change of buildings is not required; only a change of attitude.

One boy's story

DAVID DOWNES

FRANK NORMAN REALLY STARTED SOMETHING when he wrote *Bang to Rights* back in the late 1950's. There had been books on prison by ex-prisoners before that date, including the unrepeatable and glorious Brendan Behan swipe at the Teutonic English in *Borstal Boy*. But that was the exception, and most "inside" books before Norman's were by middle-class "conchie" who used their experiences as a lever for reform. Fenner Brockway's book *English Prisons Today* came out in 1922, and much of that monumental indictment is as relevant today. But the *vogue* for "inside" stories was well and truly launched by the success of Norman's books, and was followed by Tony Parker's sequence of "ghosted" documentaries: *The Courage of his Convictions* (1962), *The Unknown Citizen* (1963), and *Five Women* (1966)—this last being sadly under-rated so far. At the other extreme—modishness for its own sake—have been a stream of undistinguished offerings from any old lag that publishers could get to string a few recollections together, the whole scene being set by that grand old English tradition of "cheque book penology" for which we have to thank the *News of the World* (whose latest release is still running), the old *Sunday Pictorial* (Hume and Setty) and the *People* in particular. Grub Street never had it so good.

Apart from Tony Parker, Merfyn Turner and Norman's early books, little of distinction has emerged from this particular genre, and nothing had so far appeared on *young prisoners* (except for Behan) outside of Alan Sillitoe's *Loneliness* . . . till New Society published (about 18 months ago) a fierce article on detention centres called *The Long Blunt Shock* by a young man called Neale Pharaoh who had just been released from one of these holiday camps. The article was remarkable for its ferociously articulate condemnation of the system, both in practice and principle, from an *ex-inmate* (My God! He didn't even have "A" levels). He had already, though, been the subject of a broadcast—same title, and same interviewer, as the book now out.* One gathers that he is not credited with authorship for family reasons, but De'Ath states quite plainly that ". . . he (i.e. the subject) sat down to write and I, as editor and self-appointed illegal guardian, awaited the results with some trepidation." (Introduction.) The results, in fact, are very good indeed, in parts brilliant, and only occasionally does he lapse into merely superficial self-engrossment.

The book follows the chronology of Pharaoh's life, and chapters of autobiography are each concluded by his summary of what he now

*JUST ME AND NOBODY ELSE by Wilfred De'Ath (Hutchinson 21s.)

feels was significant. His father was a naval officer in the War, and Pharaoh barely saw him before the age of 4—he was de-mobbed in 1948. After that, the battle was unending: rarely can so authoritarian a father have confronted so naturally rebellious a son, though once it became clear that the boy was not going to submit completely to his father's authority, that parent's unbending and harsh insistence on total subservience could only lead to separation—this came when Pharaoh was 15. The rows between father and son were a caricature of those that go on in many homes, where passions of hatred and resentment more appropriate to Greek tragedy boil up over such items as length of hair, width of trousers, "manners", those outwardly marginal but symbolically highly charged areas of conflict between the generations.

"Most of our arguments were based on clothes, haircuts, and what he called 'manners'. I was just beginning to want to wear more fashionable clothes. When I went to buy new clothes, which wasn't often, he came with me and bought the plainest he could find. He went to the opposite extreme in everything; my trousers were even wider than his. We had a row that went on for a week over a pair of trousers I wanted tapered to wear in the evenings when I was with my friends. In the end I borrowed some money from my mother's purse and took them to a shop to have them done. As soon as he saw that I had disobeyed him, he took them to work and burned them along with a pair of luminous green socks I had had given to me."

Reading this sequence and its aftermath, one wonders just how different Pharaoh's life would have been had his father been fractionally less authoritarian, or his mother slightly more effectual as a buffer between the two. The episode above led on to the father ordering his 15-year-old son out until he changed his ways. He lived in a local authority hostel for six months, left grammar school, took a series of routine jobs, went on drugs and the beatnik gambits, slept around, and was put on probation for committing a gauche piece of fraud with a cheque left in a book at the library where he was working. More job-changing, and then a very routine theft from a wine-vaults where he worked led to the sentence for detention centre.

"You don't think it's possible. You read books like Brendan Behan or Sillitoe, but you don't think it really is like that. The book gets read and you lean back and say, Well, I think like that too, but those bastards don't exist—they're only caricatures. Then you look at the skin peeling from your hands where the scrubber has been held and you feel the ache in your knees. You see the endless, polished corridor, the whining screws. . . .

"Do what you're told and you'll be all right."

"You want to stand up and punch them, but this would be playing right into their hands. Fighting in a detention centre, fighting a screw,

DAVID DOWNES is a sociologist, whose book *The Delinquent Solution* is reviewed in this issue of ANARCHY. He has also contributed to ANARCHY 15, 21, 27 and 53.

senseless young hooligan, teach him a lesson; two years' Borstal, we knew he'd turn out that way from the start. Get tough on young criminals. The red lips purse, the upswept glasses flash, and a teacup crashes into its saucer. Teach them some manners."

After release, a jazz-club owner persuaded him to write the article for *New Society*, the Home Secretary (Henry Brooke) asked him to join the ill-starred advisory committee on juvenile delinquency, broadcasts and TV appearances followed. Possibly no prisoner has had such a socially successful "road back" to legitimate society. Now that Pharaoh has "arrived", probably more so than he ever would had grammar school led on to college instead of detention centre (though he is now, I gather, a student of psychology at a college of technology-cum-university), the book is part therapy, part need for money, but also seems rooted in a very real desire to make some sense out of his experiences and to make some suggestions for changing a senselessly inflexible system into one which caters more commonsensically for straightforward needs.

"Our whole system, including education, was so rigid that these subcultures formed themselves and were pushed further away instead of being absorbed. So the process crystallised into beatniks at the intelligent end of the scale and juvenile delinquents at the other."

And the system is cast-iron as ever, to judge from the recent outcry over beatniks in Matlock caves and on St. Ives beaches, in which rate-payers ignore the pollution of car-cluttered streets and ramshackle hoardings to take it all out on a few migrant bohemians. The great merit of Pharaoh's book is to describe with real insight and vivid anecdotes just how easy it is for the build-up to occur; and the polarisation between bourgeois and bohemian in civil society is the same process of escalation as that between McNamara and Ho Chi Minh in Vietnam. The long description of life in a detention centre remains the book's set-piece, but other episodes—the cheque fraud, stealing from a shop in early childhood, and getting caught at both—make fascinating reading, since Pharaoh is at heart exceptionally honest and made a mess of most offences he tried to commit. What Basil Bernstein has called the "atomic pit" of middle-class socialisation leaves its imprint even when, or especially when, it ostensibly fails to produce a well-rounded smooth-shaven, short-cropped conformist.

This book is a plea for elementary tolerance and sanity more than a systematic assault on "the State" or inequality or paternalism, but it should not be ignored by anarchists as "tame" or "not radical enough". If kings and priests survived the nineteenth century, they will survive anything by way of social change: except perhaps the slow spread of an understanding about the roots of conformity and non-conformity. Pharaoh's book is a case-study in the complex emergence of an adolescent as near to being a "rebel" as we are likely to get in our society, our time: there are thousands who've had experiences like his, and who have emerged with roughly the same views. If there is any audience for anarchism, it is surely here.

Marijuana—a comment

IAN VINE

THE BBC RECENTLY TOOK A BOLD, if belated, step in presenting an hour-long survey, on the Third Programme, called "Marijuana". This programme was a surprisingly candid and fair enquiry by Terence Feeny into the usage and effects of the drug officially known as Cannabis. To be objective in dealing with such a myth-ridden subject is an achievement for any reporter, and for the BBC to allow such a presentation is even more commendable, and surprising in view of their recent suppression of the "War Game" film.

Feeny conducted the programme mainly through the use of interviews with users, past and present, with psychiatrists and doctors. He also reported what little other factual evidence is known, and provided a minimum of personal comment. He clearly took the trouble to probe the subject to some depth, and admitted to buying a sample of marijuana himself. Since he made no contrary statement one was also left with the impression that he had discovered at first hand the effects of smoking it. Some interesting and little-known facts were unearthed, such as that at least one psychiatrist had used the drug as a tranquilliser for anxious patients before the post-war development of more efficient anxiety-reducing agents. The enquiry covered the apparently rapid increase in the number of marijuana users in recent years, how it is obtained in Britain, its subjective effects, its physiological effects, the sort of persons who use it, the question of whether it is addictive, and problems associated with its illegality under the Dangerous Drugs Act.

As readers of ANARCHY are likely to have met most of these facts before, I shall comment briefly on only a few of them, and then go on to comment on some factors which Feeny failed to mention. The programme confirmed the common view that the normal subjective effect from small doses is a feeling of lightheartedness and wellbeing. Feeny likened this to the early stages of drunkenness, which seemed only slightly misleading. Several informants mentioned the slowing down of the sense of time under marijuana, and under heavier doses this can be most marked, amounting to a complete disjunction of experiences and sometimes a feeling of fright, "the horrors", or even to total collapse, although this is rare. This confirmed by my own brief experiences of marijuana, which were marked by a strong sense of physical relaxation, sometimes with tiredness, as well as the effects above. A small experiment I conducted on myself revealed a reduction of my ability to co-ordinate perception and reaction, which could perhaps be dangerous in some circumstances, but even under quite heavy doses everyday reactions are fairly automatic. It was agreed that although, as with alcohol, sexual or violent impulses could be

exaggerated, this would only occur in predisposed persons.

Doctors admitted to having found no harmful physiological effects, either short- or long-term. Marijuana depresses the activity of the brain cortex, reducing cortical inhibition of overt behaviour; but the effect is temporary, and intrinsically quite harmless. Physiological addiction has not been found in Britain or America. Doctors mentioned a psychological dependency on the drug, but this seemed to be exaggerated. I went for weeks or months between single "turn-ons" with no particular craving. After a time the beneficial effects seemed to diminish, and I had no difficulty in doing without it entirely. For most people psychological dependency is probably less than that for caffeine, nicotine or alcohol.

The one qualification to this picture which emerged was the undoubted fact that smoking marijuana may lead on to taking "heavier" drugs, like heroin, cocaine, and some of the "pills", which undoubtedly do become addictive and injurious to health. Feeny correctly pointed out that it is in no way established that marijuana itself causes this progression; the connection is almost undoubtedly sociological. The doctors' statements that almost every "heavy" addict was introduced to drugs through marijuana (except in the case of doctors themselves) confirms the American La Guardia report's findings. It is the very illegality of marijuana itself though which makes it associated with the other drugs. People can often only obtain marijuana at clubs, parties, etc., where "pushers" may persuade them to buy something with a bigger "kick". But such people would probably become addicts whether or not they had first smoked marijuana.

Finally, Feeny discussed the question of marijuana being illegal, and pointed out that although marijuana-taking has some possible dangers, the results of it being illegal are almost equally undesirable. Apart from bringing people into contact with "pushers", its illegality itself gives an incentive for trying it to many young people. But it is at this last point that Feeny failed to make further important points. It goes without saying that the legal sanctions for the unfortunate few who are caught will be condemned by any anarchist. Apart from the intrinsic wrongs of the prison system, anyone who is imprisoned for being in possession of marijuana is likely to be brought into contact with a far more pernicious world of crime than this, as well as being marked as a criminal for life.

Equally pernicious are the chances which illegality provides for police planting and blackmail. As I know of no cases where the Law has clearly established police-planting I shall make no categorical accusations, but there have been cases where convictions have been quashed or defendants found not guilty, where the implications have been that *someone* planted marijuana on the suspect. Readers may remember that in the "Three Tuns" case in Bristol (see FREEDOM, 20.3.65, etc.), the three youths who went for trial by jury had their cases dismissed. The official enquiry, initiated by the NCCL and myself, produced the expected "whitewash" report, but it is revealing that neither myself nor the NCCL were allowed to read this report.

At no time was evidence brought forward to refute specific charges, and although considerable fuss was made over the exoneration of the officers concerned, none of them took the much-publicised opportunity to bring further action against myself. Had they done so, some evidence would have been made public which the Bristol Police would have found highly embarrassing.

One should also be concerned about the provisions of the infamous 1964 Act, whereby landlord or owner of premises where marijuana is found can himself be prosecuted, even if, as in the case of the Bristol landlord, he is not on the premises at the time. This landlord incurred a fine, enormous lawyers' fees, and the loss of his living. An appeal to the House of Lords failed because the lawyer did not register it within the statutory time limit. This aspect of the Act can only increase suspicion and intolerance of proprietors generally for young people, in addition to its other unjust effects.

However, despite this, one must have considerable reservations about advocating the legalisation of marijuana. It must be admitted that this would make its use more widespread, and some would always over-indulge, perhaps with serious effects. According to a United Nations report, data from countries such as India, the West Indies, and Arab states, where its use is universal and perhaps excessive, suggests it can lead to psychosis, crime, mental deficiency, violence, sexual perversions, and suicide. None of the doctors interviewed by Feeny could account for this discrepancy with British and American findings, but even if it is a "scare" report, founded largely on misrepresentation and ignorance, much more evidence is required before it can be said with certainty that widespread use of the drug under no restrictions at all would not have undesirable consequences.

Some readers may at this point see the expression of any reservations at all as heresy for an anarchist, who should be opposed to all retributive laws. But without in any way trying to defend our system of deterrence, incarceration, and revenge, I think that some hesitation is justified. In rejecting laws and governments I do not think one is committed to rejecting *all* control. Obviously one wants to eradicate the more stupid and unnecessary restrictions on individual freedom, and the imposition of an arbitrary will on other men and women. But equally, one wants to ensure that people don't act in such a way as to harm the wellbeing of others, and sometimes of themselves. Therefore some measure of control is necessary for any civilised society. This need not imply punitive sanctions, but it does at least imply some form of *social* control (see particularly John Ellerby, *ANARCHY* 32), some weight of social opinion and pressure which limits excesses which are genuinely anti-social. For such control to work well one requires an informed populace, and enlightened child-rearing to ensure that each person has a sense of self-responsibility which minimises the need for external control. At present these conditions simply are not met, and one simply cannot know what any sudden change in the legal status of marijuana would result in. The laws having been introduced, the harm has already been done, and their removal may not undo it all.

For these reasons I share Feeny's reluctance to advocate what might seem to be the simple answer. Certainly one should attack the overall context of the present laws, but there is a dilemma. In present circumstances, some modified law seems desirable, but this goes against long-term objectives of removing all laws. Yet the alternative of pressing for total abolition seems dangerous, as well as being almost certain to fail. We must be on our guard against over-simplification, for the issues are many and complicated. For this reason I think the current vogue, prevalent in America, but apparently spreading to London under the auspices of Alexander Trocchi and others, for "smoke-in" demonstrations, is misguided and liable to do more harm than good.

It is depressing to end on such a negative note, and to reach no more positive conclusions than did Feeny, but at least this is a reminder of the complexity of the problems to be solved in effecting a transition to a Free Society. Individually one can of course ignore the laws one disapproves of most strongly, and take the risks of being penalised, but to do this is no excuse for ignoring the wider social problems. One must do this for much of the time to protect one's sanity, but at some point it is necessary, as "Marijuana" brought home forcibly, to face the problems squarely. The use of marijuana is probably no more of an intrinsic problem than that of cigarettes or beer; it is a matter of keeping a sense of proportion. Seen in this light it is one example of a general problem to which we must devote much more attention if "anarchism" is not to remain a myth itself.

Crime as a way out

TONY GIBSON

THE DELINQUENT SOLUTION by David Downes (Routledge & Kegan Paul 42s.)

THIS BOOK IS MAINLY FOR PEOPLE who have some training in the discipline of sociology. The earlier part of it would be heavy reading for the non-sociologist, nor would the completely lay reader quite grasp much of what the author is trying to demonstrate.

However, the concepts of modern sociology are becoming increasingly well known to the educated public, and this book is both original and refreshing in its approach, and suitably tentative in its conclusions.

The title does not imply that the author has arrived at yet another "solution" to the problem of delinquency. It merely orients the thesis to the whole question of how far delinquency is in fact a personal solution to stresses engendered by modern society. The author quotes all the well-known sociological theories and examines them in the light of critical comparison, and then tests some hypotheses by his own researches into delinquency in two London boroughs. Without making any really hard and fast conclusions or (thank goodness) any *ex cathedra*

recommendations, he concludes:

"Instead of regarding the working-class delinquent as a deviant in a conformity-promoting society, it is possible to regard the working-class boy as born into a preordained delinquency-promoting situation. Our task can only then be to change that situation, so that the bulk of working-class youth is freed from pressures to deviancy and heavy personal costs."

It should be noted that this simple statement is in stark contrast to that of the usual do-gooders. The latter advocate more youth clubs, more social workers, more clinics, bigger, better, brighter (and of course more humane!) Borstals. But the preordained delinquency-producing situation is one involving the fundamental nature of our society. The delinquency rate is, in fact, as natural a product of our way of life as is the annual rate of death and injury on our roads.

David Downes' own study in London, and his reference to other parts of Britain, will help to clear away a few myths. There is little evidence of a gang system of delinquent youths in Britain, after the much-publicised pattern of American cities. Yobbos lead very dull little lives and the actual harm they do is pretty trivial. Trivial, that is, by contrast, say, with property racketeers and other business sharks (this comparison is mine, not Downes'). Delinquents can hardly be said to represent a "subculture"; their values are rather like those of respectable people, but living in such an essentially arid, opportunity-lacking situation, their forms of fun are illegal, whereas respectable people can have their fun within the law. Delinquents do not even challenge the basic assumptions of respectable people; hence while going in for thievery, vandalism and violence, they fall back on lame excuses which serve to justify themselves in terms of banal contemporary morality. Here Downes is influenced by the work of Sykes and Matza (e.g. "Techniques of Neutralisation", *American Sociological Review* 22, 1957) which is a good antidote to the contrasting view that the "Delinquent" is a special sort of animal inhabiting a special sort of jungle with its own rather romantic mores. Readers of ANARCHY who have been in prison, for one reason or another, will probably have experienced the conventional dreariness of the average criminal. Delinquents are in no sense "revolutionaries" against society, they are merely its victims, parodying the vices, snobberies, pretensions and aspirations of the respectable. Their essential characteristics are weakness and failure.

It should be noted that this is an entirely sociological work, and should not be compared with those books which study delinquency from a psychological point of view (e.g. Gordon Trassler's *Explanations of Criminality*). Both approaches are entirely valid. Downes does not stick his neck out in advocating an anarchist solution to the sociological problem he delineates, but again he avoids the role of what may be called the consultant engineer in human affairs, except in so far as a sociologist may point out that if we pursue policy A, the result will probably be Y, but if we inaugurate B, then Z will almost certainly come about.

Vandalism and the social structure

STAN COHEN

JOHN ELLERBY'S INTERESTING "Notes on Vandalism" (ANARCHY 61) raises a few unanswered questions which I would like to look at in this article. I particularly want to concentrate on an issue which I have argued (obsessionally) anarchists tend to ignore: the dissensus and conflict inherent in the social stratification of society. Our analysis must start off from two points: firstly the differential distribution of rates of vandalism and other forms of deviance across the social structure and secondly, the differential definition attached to the same act depending on the actor's and the definer's position in the social structure. The first point is more obvious, the second needs spelling out—we encounter it immediately when we look at the problem of defining vandalism. To what sort of acts do we attach the label "vandalism"?

Defining vandalism

Deviant behaviour is a transactional process between the deviant and the community. An "offence" is not just deviant per se but because it is defined and labelled as such by others. The differential labelling of what is legally the same act might result in differential classification and treatment. The answer, for example, to the question "how much of what we could call vandalism is youthful exuberance and how much is wilful malicious destruction?" depends on our frame of reference for labelling the behaviour. If the behaviour is understandable in terms of a theory (usually a corny theory!) of "the adolescent's need for adventure and self expression", then we attach the label youthful exuberance. If the behaviour doesn't fit any theory it is labelled malicious or wanton. ANARCHY was engaging in the same process when it felt it could define some types of property destruction and defacement as "creative vandalism" and others as "aimless wanton destruction". I am not arguing about the relevance of such distinctions—I am only noting that we must be aware of the bases, usually ideological, for making them.

The most obvious basis for such distinctions, and one that ties up with my first starting off point, the distribution of rates of vandalism, is social class differentiation. Certain groups in our society are given,

STAN COHEN is Lecturer in Sociology at Enfield College of Technology.

as it were, a licence for vandalism. As John Mays writes:

"... the party of public schoolboys who damage property during the course of a 'rag' are behaving very differently from the street corner gang who smash street lamps or shop windows just for the fun of it or to work off their aggression. The mores of the Public School community allow and even encourage such explosively expressive behaviour in its restricted setting whereas the casual destructiveness of promiscuous gangs has no such approval to sustain it."¹

Students rags are obvious forms of semi-tolerated rowdyism and vandalism. Damage and inconvenience in such incidents is often very severe—the cavorting before last month's Hospitals Cup Final at Richmond produced at least six serious casualties, including a girl with a fractured pelvis, plus the complete demolition of a turnstile wall and a vast area including the street around the ground covered with flour, paint and dyes. Police have considerable discretion not to prosecute even when obvious offences have been committed, and the scale of sentences handed out by the courts varies according to the offender's social status as student or mere "youth" (whenever a newspaper report refers to "youths" you can be sure whom they mean). It has been suggested recently, however, that public tolerance for such behaviour is being exceeded and that there is more disquiet at students enjoying an immunity that those not at university or college do not.²

Many of course would be predisposed to see other types of student activity as "creative vandalism". I am thinking particularly of political demonstrations where damage is done—windows, usually of embassies, libraries or other official buildings, broken. When J. B. Priestley asked in a *New Statesman* article (November 25, 1965) why student demonstrators "should be treated indulgently as if they were quite different from mobs of garage hands, apprentice fitters, bus drivers", he was denounced by correspondents in the next issue for not seeing the difference between a sincere protest against, say, Smith's UDI and the "other" malevolent destructiveness and violence. A recent editorial in the staid *Justice of the Peace and Local Government Review* gives us yet another set of labels. Commenting on "violence by union pickets and hooligan youths" it goes on: "while we disapprove strongly of such incidents as stealing an eagle from the London Zoo as an incident of what is called a student rag, it is at least to be said that this and similar incidents, while ill-judged, have a genuine purpose somewhere behind them and we have been spared in this country the violent scenes promoted in other less civilized countries by students or so called students who so far as their mental capacities permit, disapprove of the way in which they are governed". John Ellerby quotes David Downes to the effect that political awareness is "ultimately the only alternative to delinquency for the stifled working class adolescent"—what we call political awareness is, to some, destructive hooliganism; what we call a senseless act, which would have got someone from a non-immunized social class into trouble, others call "ill-judged".

A final example of this differential labelling to show that even the

type of act, about which there would be greatest consensus in describing as aimless and destructive, can be hailed by some in a very different way. Roger Moody, writing in *Peace News* (July 16, 1963) about the formation of "non-violent elites" welcomes signs of "Luddism" in small communities which he hopes can be canalized into peaceful forms of action: "In recent months I have observed the genesis of a number of acts which I would place in this category—obstruction and incendiaryism on railway lines, carried out mostly but not solely by children. Without reading too much into these activities, the involved spectator sees growing here an articulate group-consciousness directed not merely against British Rail itself, but against the alien standards it buttresses." Go tell that to the JPs!

The point—which I have taken rather a long time in making but I think is worth dwelling on—is that before we start studying the characteristics of "vandalism", let alone try to explain it and let alone think of "solutions", we must be aware of the problems involved in defining any form of behaviour as socially problematic and therefore worthy of time and money being spent on it. In more than the obvious sense, we make our own social problems.

Types of vandalism

Just as it is usually misleading to talk of "crime" or "juvenile delinquency" as if each were a single process, it should be clear that it is not particularly illuminating to talk of "vandalism". Windows may be broken by a group of ten-year-olds as part of a game, by a homeless old man who wants a bed in prison, by a crowd on the way home from a Cup Final, or by a gang during a race riot. Each of these acts might require a different mode of explanation and it would seem important then to devise a meaningful way of distinguishing types of vandalism.

An American study³ of apprehended offenders found three types of vandalism: predatory, vindictive and wanton. Predatory vandalism covers the more utilitarian type of damage such as junking of lead and tin from roofs, smashing and looting of parking meters and much of the telephone kiosk damage, especially of the coin box. In vindictive vandalism, the chief motive is to express antagonism and hatred felt towards particular individuals or groups. The behaviour might be expressive of minority group conflict and may be directed toward symbolic property such as synagogues or cemeteries. The element of spite or settling a grudge is often present—a good example being the damage to youth clubs by groups who have been excluded by the leader. An archetypal case of revenge vandalism (and one that I would have thought apocryphal if I didn't have documentary proof of the circumstances) was the 13-year-old boy in a Midlands town who, disappointed at the Xmas gifts received after praying, decided to "get his own back on God" and set fire to the church, causing over £50,000 worth of damage.

The third category, wanton vandalism, is by far the largest and covers the vast range of acts that most people label vandalism. This seems to be the residual category into which we put everything we

can't explain. Martin thinks that in this group, the identity and ownership of the property damaged seems entirely irrelevant—I think this is a doubtful contention and that it is *highly* relevant as John Ellerby points out, that “the targets for vandalism seem to be things which are public property”. The most common targets for “wanton vandalism” are community owned or symbolically middle class property.

It is extremely important to study all the possible targets of vandalism, defined strictly as wilful damage to property. The great number of acts are not reported and there is therefore a danger of building up a theory about just the acts that do come into the news. Such a theory is not a theory of vandalism at all but a theory of a stereotype of vandalism. The lesson can be drawn from the field of murder where the study of the victims' characteristics has demolished the popular picture of the “typical” murderer as the sinister stranger who strangles helpless young girls in dark alleyways. Nothing could be further from the truth.

Differential rates

Recent, mainly American, theories of juvenile delinquency have attempted to explain what is known as the delinquent subculture. What they are saying—and I am condensing here a much more involved argument—is that serious gang delinquency is part of the reaction of the lower class adolescent against the dominant middle-class value system. In a relatively “open” society—the theory goes—the criteria facilitating upward mobility and status are applied by middle-class control agents, the chief of which is the school. Criteria such as deferred gratification, ambition and self control are unlikely to be produced by lower-class socialization—but the child is judged by the same measuring rod as the middle-class child and what is more, has the same carrots dangled before him: he finds himself then, “status-wise”, at the bottom of the heap. Faced together with others, with the problem of adjustment, he is in the market for a solution. What he does is to work out his own system, the delinquent subculture, which is characterized by behaviour that is malicious, non-utilitarian and negativistic, i.e. an inversion of the middle-class ethic.

David Downes⁴ has recently reviewed the shortcomings of this very plausible argument and found that the idea of status-deprivation did not seem to fit very well with a group of working-class youngsters in the East End. Nevertheless, the phenomenon he had to explain was the same from which the American theorists had to start: the concentration of serious gang delinquency among working-class adolescents in the urban areas of a highly industrialized society. This is the population at risk—the boys who leave their Sec Mods at fifteen, having for many years found little of interest in our educational non-system, who drift in and out of a range of routine jobs and similarly drift into fringe or genuine delinquency. The key word is drift—among Downes' boys at least, there was little active repudiation of the social system that had assigned them their status—the boys had, by and large, realistically low job aspirations. Jobs anyway were not what mattered. It was leisure that counted, and it was here, Downes stresses, that the ways

were blocked. “Constructive” leisure, such as political activity, was either unavailable or looked superbly irrelevant; pure commercial leisure was all right, but only to be sampled—for the real satisfaction of total immersion one needed more money, more contacts than the boys had. So, by another route, we arrive again at a group of adolescents in the market for a solution. Although there are obvious differences in emphasis, because the situations themselves are so obviously different, the same *sort* of predisposing factors are present in both the American and English experiences: “culture conflict along class lines, school failure and subsequent dissociation from work goals, and consequent non-involvement in desirable areas of non work” (Downes, p 250).

How does vandalism fit into all this? By definition it is the archetypal activity of the delinquent subculture—it is malicious, negativistic and non-utilitarian. But again we must be careful of our subjective judgements in attaching these labels—what appears to us as senseless and aimless is both meaningful to the actor and understandable in terms of the situation in which he finds himself. The intellectual's favourite ploy is to describe something that doesn't fit into his theory as being devoid of meaning and sense.

We know little of the precise social class distribution of vandalism. Data from self reported studies (i.e. where a randomly selected group anonymously report their offences) make it reasonable to assume that as with other types of delinquency, the distribution is wider through the social structure than the statistics indicate. But the distribution is still by no means random. The few studies of apprehended vandals—all in America—show the familiar high, but by no means perfect, correlations between vandalism and low socio-economic status, deteriorated housing areas, etc. A recent area study of St. Louis also showed an association between vandalism and areas of high non-white residence (where the social rank of the area was high, the association was even more pronounced, suggesting a type of relative, rather than absolute, deprivation). We must be careful again to note that individual types of vandalism may run against this general pattern. American studies of the 1959-60 “Swastika incidents” which involved considerable damage and defacement of property, showed that the typical offender came from middle income areas.

The fact that vandalism is more a group than an individual activity is fairly clearly established. The lone vandal is the exception, for the rest, vandalism might be just one aspect of the subculture. To the extent that this subculture is located in urban working-class areas, we have to explain a great deal of vandalism within the context of a structural theory of society that takes social class differences into account.

This does not mean that we should ignore psychological factors—Martin's study for example, found at least a few cases in which the vandalism was one facet of “a massively disordered personality”. More important however, are on the spot factors such as the powerful effect of the group—what Redl called “group psychological intoxication: the way people act when they go to a convention in somebody else's town”.

This factor, together with the need for social approval from one's peers might explain how the group member may go beyond his original intention and break all the windows in the building instead of just one. These factors were present in the Teddy Boy riots of the fifties in such activities as cinema seat slashing as well as the more recent Mods and Rockers (although in the latter case, contrary to public opinion, actual damage was slight).

There is also the psychological catharsis that Ellerby mentioned and, of course, the type of general satisfaction in the act indulged in for its own sake. An undergraduate in an American study gave as his motive for vandalism "the sheer enjoyment of breaking a pane of glass; it is the sound I think which is the stimulating factor".

This last point seems to bear out a recent interesting theory that far from being peculiar to delinquents, the search for excitement and kicks, the high valuation on toughness (the 007 syndrome) as well as the non-attachment to work goals are part of the "subterranean values" of the whole society.⁵ The delinquent culture is not so much an inversion of the middle class ethic as a caricature of it. Delinquents merely reflect the (private) values of the leisure class, which are often only exposed on ritual occasions—examples in our context might be Guy Fawkes Night, students rags, rugby festivals, etc. This theory reinforces Downes' stress on leisure, but of course, as he rightly points out, one still has to explain why delinquency is not evenly distributed throughout the class structure. One must take into account "the differential availability of leisure to adolescents by social class . . . the lower-class adolescent experiences a double motivation towards delinquency if he is frustrated both in the sphere of work success-goals and in the realm of leisure success-goals".

Solutions

It would be presumptuous to offer solutions to so complex a problem—as I've suggested the first thing to do is to be sure what your problem is. I would like to take up however, just one strand implicit in the above argument, that the solution might be found in the area of "leisure".

To talk of vandalism and delinquency in general as providing the satisfaction and excitement that a dead-end education and job market patently do not offer, seems dangerously close to the facile explanation given by omniscient adults and pseudo articulate teenagers alike that "it's all because they're (we're) bored". In this perverted form, the boredom explanation is often sublime nonsense. It rests on the belief shared by scout masters and occupational therapists that as long as people are doing something constructive they can't get up to mischief. This belief goes back to what David Cooper has called in another context (*New Society*, March 11, 1965) "the ancient myth that tells us that Satan makes work (destructiveness, masturbation, promiscuity) for idle hands". Although I'm with John Ellerby and others who want a non-punitive solution to vandalism, I wonder whether some of their calls for "constructive" use of leisure don't stem from this attitude.

A corruption of the line of argument I've tried to summarize would be the muscular Christian approach to the problem: lay on more youth clubs, let them play table tennis, send them up Mount Snowdon because these things are more constructive than sitting in a coffee bar. Who is to judge what is constructive? To many people constructive = healthy = outdoors, and by outdoors they don't mean holding placards in Trafalgar Square. Of course I'm not saying that no useful work can be done in this field: let's have International Voluntary Service by all means, and Community Service Volunteers too, but we must realize the limitations of these services including the fact that they don't reach the population at risk. To the extent that there is a solution, it lies further back—in a total revolution of the educational and vocational chances of a large section of our adolescents.

References:

- ¹J. B. Mays: *Growing up in the City* (Liverpool, University of Liverpool Press, 1954) p 18.
- ²For some documentation on this subject see N. Osborough: "Police Discretion Not to Prosecute Students: A British Problem" *Journal of Criminal Law, Criminology and Police Science*, June 1965, pp 241-245.
- ³J. M. Martin: *Juvenile Vandalism* (Springfield, Thomas, 1961).
- ⁴D. M. Downes: *The Delinquent Solution* (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1966).
- ⁵For a development of this theme see D. Matza: *Delinquency and Drift* (New York: John Wiley & Sons, 1964).

FURTHER COMMENTS ON ANARCHY 61: CREATIVE VANDALISM

Please convey my congratulations to the editor of ANARCHY 61 for supplying me with the first new idea that I have encountered since I came to Australia. The concept of creative vandalism is widely needed everywhere, but here it is more urgently needed in the public sphere, especially with the fate of Sydney Opera House hanging in the balance.

OWEN WEBSTER



We have already sold out the ten copies you sent us on Creative Vandalism—an issue with many, many good ideas. So, increase our order of ANARCHY from 10 to 25.

Berkeley, Cal., USA

SAM HARDIN



ANARCHY has once again excelled itself in finding creative solutions to every problem.

London, E.15

M. HARLAND



I thought you might be interested in these clippings from the

Vancouver Sun (April 18, 1966) reporting our "Plant-In". I had your "Creative Vandalism" issue in my pocket the whole time.

Professor of English,
Simon Fraser University,
British Columbia

RALPH MAUD

THE CUTTINGS ENCLOSED INCLUDED THE FOLLOWING:

After the paint-in comes the plant-in.

Professors and students at Simon Fraser University staged it Sunday in an area the authorities have designated as a parking lot, and there was no immediate reaction from the authorities.

Armed with shovels, rakes, plants, trees, buckets and placards they marched on the swampy lot and spent the afternoon transforming it into an instant garden.

Although original landscaping plans called for a grassy, wooded area, the board of governors later ordered construction of a 38-space parking lot.

But faculty members and students disagreed.

Taking a lead from the courthouse fountain paint-in, they decided to get in before the blacktoppers took over completely.

"This is not just a negative protest," said political science professor Tom Brose, grunting as he strained with his shovel.

Plant-in organizer Dr. Ralph Maud, professor of English, said the event was the first in North America.

"It's a real grass-roots movement," he quipped.

It was generous handfuls of grass seed that topped off the afternoon of fun and hardwork.

About 30 participants manned tools to first break the ground.

Pudgy professors in shirt-sleeves and co-eds in shorts and sunsuits sloshed through the muddy areas to build a pond at one end of the lot.

Off-beat posters expressed the feelings of the demonstrators:

"Help, I'm a prisoner in a parking lot factory"; "Please don't defoliate our garden"; "Happiness is a mountain without cars" and simply "People, trees, people, trees . . ."

The plant-in may go beyond the boundaries of SFU. Education student Gillian Lindridge said the idea could be applied in other parts of the Lower Mainland by those concerned with vanishing parks.

AUTO-DESTRUCTIVE ART

IN THE COURSE of his article in *ANARCHY* 61, John Ellerby presents a completely distorted picture of auto-destructive art. This version is based *exclusively* on an article published in the *Architectural Association Journal*, now called *Arena*. This article, by Mr. Paul Oliver, is indeed an eye-witness account. It is also an instructive example of the falsification of events by an "eye-witness"—a common enough occurrence.

The talk and demonstration at the AA, on the 24th February, 1965, is documented in four issues of the *AAJ*. The following Editorial

comment appears in the March issue.

Shortly after the Special GM, Gustav Metzger started talking on auto-destructive art to a crowded audience in the lecture hall. His listeners were mainly students, but at least one ex-President of the AA was in attendance, and if the demonstration in Ching's Yard afterwards got a little out of hand, it was certainly memorable.

Quite where the lecturer's planned exhibition ended and the general impromptu melee which followed started was somewhat difficult to determine. At the end, Ching's Yard looked an even worse battlefield than it usually does, littered with broken glass, timber, water from burst plastic bags, ink bottles, old plaster models and some seemingly recently perfect AA crockery. Two empty fire extinguishers perched incongruously and uselessly in the centre of the littered yard as the initiates to auto-destructive art went home. It was quite a way to get rid of one's natural destructive impulses.

In April, Mr. Paul Oliver's article is published. The next issue contains this Editorial statement.

Gustav Metzger, whose lecture on Auto-Destructive Art was reported in the last issue has asked us to point out that at the conclusion of his talk he asked to be disassociated from the subsequent demonstration in Ching's Yard, which, owing to shortage of time and the late arrival of materials, was not arranged or conducted under his supervision. JS

In June, the *Journal* printed this letter from John Crallan, who was in charge of the team of students working on the demonstration.

It is unfortunate that Paul Oliver was for some reason misinformed in his review of Gustav Metzger's lecture in the April issue of the *Journal*. The demonstration was in fact, hampered by rain and late delivery of components, incompletely prepared by the time the lecture was due. Rather than cancel it altogether, it was decided, by those of us who had been working during the day, to go ahead with an improvised demonstration and see what would happen. Gustav made it clear that he was not responsible for what followed his talk, and was understandably disappointed that his original plans had not materialised.

This being so, it would be unfair to comment on a would-be critic's analysis which has as a premise the juxtaposition of theory and practice. However, it is sad to read cynical reference to the Third Reich in a context unrelated to persecution in any way. No doubt crowd hysteria as at football games, carnivals, or blues shouts, has disturbing elements, but in my view it is somewhat academic to discuss the limits of creativity in this context. In the final analysis the evening's expenditure was for me justified by the unusual occurrence of a large audience, having participated, leaving the AA satisfied and in good humour, rather than frustrated by curtailed discussion or after-wine speeches. A refreshing departure from the norm.

There was an unbridgeable gulf between the demonstration as planned and the demonstration that occurred. My plan made no provision for the participation of spectators *except as silent witnesses*. This does not mean that I in any way dismiss the demonstration. It was an extremely important experience for me—as it was for many people present. A number of people at the AA were upset by the Oliver article, not only because it was unfair to me, but also because by its distortion of the facts, it was also unfair to the student-body who created what was surely one of the most savage and brilliant Happenings.

GUSTAV METZGER.

Torture in South Africa

JEREMY WESTALL

RECENTLY LORD CARADON, Britain's representative at the United Nations, opposed an oil blockade of South Africa because it would not be in Britain's interests to do so. This has been known to those who have investigated the nature of South Africa for some time, indeed South Africa herself has spent a fair amount of money reminding the British people of their involvement in South African prosperity.

An advertisement that appeared in the *Daily Telegraph* on March 18th, 1963, and paid for by the South African Embassy in London stated that: "Direct British investment in South Africa is £1,000,000,000. The total foreign investment is £1,500,000,000". The advertisement did not say that in the year ending June 30th, 1963, 17,394 people were given 83,206 lashes in South Africa under an Act making whipping compulsory for certain offences. (*South African Star* 27.2.65.)

The advertisement did however relate that in 1961 "Britain derived a profit of £24,000,000 from direct investment as well as a profit of £18,900,000 from portfolio investment in South Africa".

"Last year Britain exported £148,000,000 worth of goods to South Africa and had a total favourable balance of trade of £33,000,000. This made South Africa her second best trading partner." Also the South African Embassy reminded us that South Africa accounted for two-thirds of the "free world's" gold production. "As usual, most of this was sent to London for sale."

To put the issue bluntly, we could say that "Western capitalist interests are involved in Southern Africa up to their necks"¹ or that "British money, and British politicians, are building and defending apartheid"². But they also defend and collaborate with the means to preserve apartheid—they are accessories to torture, murder and misery beyond all words.

Rumours of things done to political prisoners in South Africa began to become public in 1964. Ten political prisoners alleged that South African security police were assaulting, maltreating, and otherwise using third-degree methods on prisoners to obtain information. One of the

prisoners, a 90-day detainee, Mrs. Mary Moodley, said in her affidavit that she was forced to stand for 13 hours and told by the police that they did not care if they made her mad, but they would make her talk.³

This last point seemed well underlined when a 90-day detainee, Suliman Saloojee, jumped from a seventh-floor window in security police headquarters while being questioned.⁴

Anyone who doubted that anything might have been wrong with such methods of maintaining Christian civilisation against atheistic Communism were further to be alarmed when the Anglican Church in Pretoria cancelled their performance of the "Messiah" because the Government insisted that whites and blacks use separate entrances and have separate blocks of seats.⁵ When the Department of Bantu Administration banned an orchestra of 40 white musicians from playing with an African choir of 120 in the performance of the "Messiah", even Christ began to wonder.⁶

The real impact of the torture revelations in prisons in South Africa was left to the *Rand Daily Mail* which printed a series of articles on the question. Harold Strachan, a former political prisoner, described his experiences in various prisons in which he had been held. A graduate art lecturer at two universities who had been a pilot in the South African Air Force held the ear of many a person who would have dismissed any African as a liar. Appalling sanitary conditions, degrading treatment, frequent brutal assaults on African prisoners and the devastating effect of prolonged solitary confinement on mental capacity were described.⁷

Then the Head Warder at Cinderella Prison made a sworn statement to the *South African Sunday Times* (25.7.65): "I have seen electric-shock treatment being given to prisoners—as a punishment and in order to make them talk. Once a prisoner has had the treatment he is prepared to sign anything." Theron reported to the Prisons Department giving details of how warders had beaten up prisoners to make them give false evidence. Three months later a complaint of a disciplinary nature was brought against him by the Prisons Department.

Another warder, Gysbert van Schalkwyk gave information to the *Rand Daily Mail* about electric shock treatment of prisoners. It wasn't long before he was in prison as an inmate for three years. An ex-convict, Isaac Setshedi, published an account of prison experiences in the *Rand Daily Mail* which included allegations that prisoners were burned and given electric shocks by warders at Cinderella gaol.⁸ He received a six month sentence. Filisberto Taimo, who published similar allegations was also jailed for six months.⁹ "Abuses and irregularities" were reported by another warder at the Cinderella prison—he was arrested shortly afterwards and charged with being in possession of marijuana.¹⁰

Two African prisoners who had laid charges of assault against a group of African prisoners at Baviaanspoort prison were subsequently kicked and beaten, their heads were smashed against the floor and their bodies mutilated by three other prisoners. The guards outside heard

nothing because the windows were closed.¹¹

Amnesty International, in a report on conditions for political prisoners in South Africa over the last five years, suggests that they were singled out for the worst treatment. Cells were often insanitary and overcrowded; food for Africans was often inadequate; searching was done in public; prisoners who reported sick did not always see a qualified doctor; exercise was often denied and even Bibles were sometimes withheld. Punishments had been imposed without proper investigation; letters had been delayed or lost. The report states that electric shock treatment as well as other forms of torture are used in interrogation extensively.¹²

Nevertheless, Harold Strachan, who really started these revelations, was found guilty of causing publication of false information about prison conditions in South Africa. He pleaded not guilty at his trial. The impartial judge described Strachan as a "twister".

But to return to that most valuable advertisement from the South African Embassy. "South Africa ensures considerable employment in key industries in Britain. Last year she bought 30,000 British motor vehicles." Also since 1960 South Africa has charged 7,659 political persons and 9,352 have been detained.

If it is true that Britain's prosperity is dependent on South Africa, and that the capitalist countries need South Africa's gold for their stability, then one might fairly say that we live in our prosperity only because our South African neighbours are prepared to sink to the depths (and beyond) of human depravity to maintain their foul, despicable and evil system of government.

DEREVOLUTIONISATION

Next Month's ANARCHY

will appear

on the 111th anniversary of the day
of which Karl Marx said:

"the English Revolution began
yesterday in Hyde Park".

Which is a good enough reason
for next month's ANARCHY
to discuss why this revolution
never got off the ground.

(under such distinguished patronage)

¹*The Unholy Alliance* by Rosalynde Ainslie [Anti-Apartheid Movement].

²*The Collaborators* by Rosalynde Ainslie and Dorothy Robinson [Anti-Apartheid Movement].

³*Guardian*, 21.10.64.

⁴See *Times*, 3.2.65, for report of inquest.

⁵*Guardian*, 24.6.65.

⁶*South African Star*, 25.5.65.

⁷*Rand Daily Mail*, 30.6.65 and 2.7.65.

⁸*Rand Daily Mail*, 30.7.65.

⁹See *Guardian*, 2.10.65.

¹⁰*Times*, 13.9.65.

¹¹*Guardian*, 16.9.65.

¹²See *Times*, 16.9.65.